

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT



ARCTIC BORDERS STILL AREN'T SETTLED

Even with the world's longest peaceful border and advanced mapping capabilities, **Canada and the United States disagree about where their Arctic border begins and ends, specifically in the Beaufort Sea.**

Canada's claims on the Northwest Passage put it at odds with the international community. As melting ice makes the area easier to navigate and shipping routes get busier, these disagreements have the potential to impede peaceful exploration of the region.

Finalized in 1982 and fully operational in 1994, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides a framework for governance of territorial claims on international waters, creating Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), wherein each nation has exclusive sovereign rights over all natural resources within 200 nautical miles of its coast. Consequently, as more resources are discovered in the Arctic and Arctic shipping increases, the size and scope of each country's EEZ has become increasingly important. Free passage is not permitted through internal waters, but is permitted through territorial waters and EEZs. Though it honors

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Now the challenges in the region are not just environmental. There are other issues at stake. The melting of sea ice, for example, will result in more shipping, fishing, and tourism, and the possibility to develop newly accessible oil and gas reserves. We seek to pursue these opportunities in a smart, sustainable way that preserves the Arctic environment and ecosystem.

—**Hillary Clinton**, Former United States Secretary of State

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UNCLOS, the United States has yet to ratify the treaty—the only member of the Arctic Council that has yet to do so—and therefore does not have access to dispute intervention from UNCLOS' many governing bodies, such as the International Seabed Authority, which regulates deep sea mining. As a result, the United States can do little to contest Canada's submission of a claim for exclusive rights to an additional 1.7 million square kilometers of Arctic seafloor.

CONTESTED CANADIAN CLAIMS TO THE ARCTIC

1 Beaufort Sea

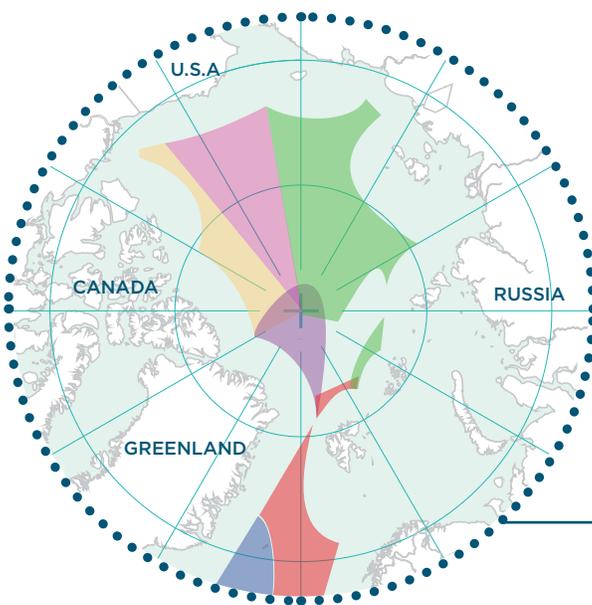
With potential oil and gas reserves in the Beaufort Sea, Canada and the United States both claim EEZ rights to the extension of the land boundary between Yukon and Alaska in the Beaufort Sea. Canada would benefit from any natural reserves if the maritime border is ruled along the 141st meridian and therefore becomes a linear extension of the land border. The United States rejects Canada's claims and argues that the border must be determined with the equidistance principle, following the natural land borders. A resolution is still pending.

2 Northwest Passage

As Arctic pack ice melts, the Northwest Passage could become a vital trade route, 40 percent shorter than the Suez Canal and cutting the trip from Europe to Asia by 5,000 nautical miles. Debate centers on whether or not the waters surrounding the Canadian archipelago are considered an international strait or internal Canadian waters. If determined international waters, Canada would be forced to recognize passage rights of other states. If the Northwest Passage is deemed internal Canadian waters, Canada could regulate traffic and enforce its own laws. A resolution is still pending.

3 Continental Shelf

In December 2013, Canada submitted claims to expand its continental shelf, potentially including the North Pole. If ratified by UNCLOS, Canada's claims would enlarge its Arctic territory by 1.7 million square kilometers. However, it is likely that Canada's claims will overlap with those of Russia, the United States, Norway, and Denmark, and will therefore be disputed.



Continental Shelf Claims

- Canada
- U.S.A.
- Russia
- Norway
- Iceland
- Denmark
- Arctic Circle

Beaufort Sea Claims

